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ABSTRACT

Begun as a study of the impact of participation on the abilities and practices in Literacy Volunteers of New York City (LVNYC), this book is a snapshot in time of the lives of five adults. It describes their participation in a literacy program and contains their tales of change, courage, shame, struggle, and triumph. Section I presents profiles of five program participants and the instructional program at LVNYC. Each student tells a unique story and helps readers understand different facets of change. The LVNYC instructional program is the subject of the final profile in the section, helping readers understand more details of students' experiences in the program. Section II proposes a framework for how adults move through a profound transformation of identity and world-view as they move further into the literate culture. It proposes that culture and literacy practices are interwoven; it is not possible to change one without an impact on the other. The framework draws heavily on a model proposed by Lofland and Stark (1965) for identity change. Section III explores the implications of this framework for literacy students, educators, and others interested in personal change in the complex social world. This includes asking practitioners to become more reflective about their philosophy of education and their values and to view literacy education as a partnership with their students. An appendix details the study methodology, which included open-ended focus group interviews, individual interviews, and observations. Contains 74 references and an index. (YLB)

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